

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



4-H CLUB ACHIEVEMENT IN 1936

A radio discussion among Dr. C. B. Smith, C. E. Potter, Ray A. Turner, C. A. Sheffield, Madge J. Reese, and Gertrude L. Warren, Extension Service, and Morse Salisbury, Radio Service, broadcast Saturday, November 7, 1936, in the 4-H Club Program of the National Farm and Home Hour by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of associated radio stations.

---ooOoo---

SALISBURY:

Thank you, Everett; here we are in Washington.

To take part in this Achievement Day program we have here with us in the Washington studios Dr. C. B. Smith, assistant director of the Federal Extension Service, and beloved mentor of 4-H Clubs and other extension work for more than 30 years. Dr. Smith will preside over the round table discussion of 4-H Club achievement in which will take part C. E. Potter of the Eastern section of the Federal Extension Office. (Mr. Potter, will you take a bow to the radio audience, please?)

POTTER:

Good afternoon, radio listeners, particularly in the Northeastern States.

SALISBURY:

And here is a voice thoroughly familiar to you (in fact, none of these voices are unfamiliar to confirmed listeners to 4-H Club programs) -- here is Ray Turner of the North Central Section of the Federal Extension Office.

TURNER:

How do you do, 4-H folks and friends.

SALISBURY:

Next we present a gentlemen who spoke just a few days ago on the Farm and Home Hour. From the Southern section of the Federal Extension Office, Mr. C. A. Sheffield.



SHEFFIELD:

I am pleased to be with this audience again. Thank you, Mr. Salisbury.

SALISBURY:

And this is not an entirely masculine gathering -- as decidedly it should not be because 4-H Club work enrolls 3 girls in the United States to every 2 boys. So to represent the 4-H Club girls in reporting achievement we have from the Western Section of the Federal Extension Office, Miss Madge J. Reese. Miss Reese arranges and presides over the annual broadcasts from the national 4-H Club camp here in Washington so you all know her voice. Miss Reese

REESE:

It's a pleasure to visit with you again.

SALISBURY:

And here is the club organization specialist of the Federal Extension Office, Miss Gertrude L. Warren.

WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Salisbury, and good afternoon, listeners to the 4-H club programs.

SALISBURY:

Now having done the presentation honors, let me take a back seat. Dr. Smith, will you call for the reports of 4-H Club achievement, nationally, during the past year.

SMITH:

Very well, Morse.

I am going to ask Miss Warren to give us some of the facts about the progress of 4-H Club work the country over during the past year. As organization specialist she has been compiling such facts from the reports that have come

in from all the States. And now Miss Warren, we will appreciate your telling us what you found out about the trends in club work during 1936.

WARREN:

Being a Government employee I will be expected to start my report with statistics. Here they are, just as few of them as I can use to tell the numerical story of 4-H Club progress in 1936:

Membership -- for the first time more than a million rural boys and girls of the eligible ages -- 10 to 21 -- enrolled in 4-H Clubs this year. This was a considerable increase over 1935. The increase was larger than the average growth in 4-H Clubs during any previous year since Dr. Seaman A. Knapp organized the 4-H Clubs at the beginning of the century.

Achievement -- More than 70 per cent of all the club members in the country completed their project work. There were about 16 States in which more than 80 per cent of the members completed their work.

Number of clubs -- Some 70 thousand clubs were organized this year. That's an increase of 10 thousand over last year.

Leaders -- More than 110 thousand men and women voluntarily devoted time and effort to the work of 4-H Clubs during the year. That's an increase of 4 thousand over the number of volunteer leaders in 1935.

REESE:

If I may drop in a comment here, I would like to say that is the most significant figure you have given yet, I believe, Miss Warren. More 4-H Club work can be done and it can help more rural young people only if more of the men and women of the rural community are willing to join the devoted army of volunteer leaders who are the backbone of 4-H Club work. Lack of local leaders was the worst hampering influence, as I recall it, in the early years of the work. It was almost impossible to find one leader for each club organized in a county. How was it this year, Miss Warren?

WARREN:

Well, you remember I gave a statistic of 70 thousand clubs organized and another statistic of 110 thousand local leaders serving them. That means there were over 18 local leaders for each 10 clubs.

REESE:

I suppose that means that most clubs had both a local leader and assistant local leader. I know that's true in the West.

SHEFFIELD:

It is in the South, too. Not only do we have more local leaders for the clubs, but the local leaders work harder at their jobs. They attend at least twice as many leaders' training conferences as they used to.

With the steady growth in the number of local leaders who are willing to put their time and their work into guiding club members in projects, we hope throughout the South to have a local leader for each project group in the community clubs. That may sound like a lot of official language to the people who don't live on farms but I guess we don't have time to explain it now except to say in the South we don't organize separate clubs for every kind of a project -- that is, for corn growing, for livestock feeding, for poultry keeping -- we organize one club and then different groups of club members take up the projects they want. Now the reason we had to do this in the beginning was that local leaders were too few to go around if we organized on a project basis. So we organized on a community basis and made each leader responsible for all the project groups. Well, now, as we get more leaders it is my hope that we will have one for each project group. But I am holding up the progress of this program, Miss Warren. Please go ahead with your statistical report.

WARREN:

Well, I will give you one more statistic -- the one million club members in the country carried on more than 2 million projects this year. That is to say, each club member learned by doing to do a particular line of actual farm or home work, or disciplined his thinking and helped form the characteristics of good citizenship.

SMITH:

Well, after all, that is the reason why Federal and State and County governments put the money of the taxpayers into maintenance of 4-H Club work. We are gratified to learn from the opinions of eminent psychologists, such as Hartshorne and May of Yale University and Germane and Germane of Missouri, who made studies of the values of 4-H Club work -- to learn that they consider 4-H Club work one of the greatest character building agencies in America. They held that in meeting the actual situations of daily life on the farm, in the home, school or community, 4-H Club members make important and far-reaching decisions, and that making these decisions definitely builds the characters through fixing in the Club members good habits of thinking and acting.

Well, now we have a very brief time left to report for the nation as a whole some things about the results of 4-H Club demonstrations of actual farming and homemaking operations. These are the basic method of 4-H Club work and the foundation of its benefits to individual members of the home and the community.

Miss Warren, what would you say were the trends in demonstration work in the Clubs during the past year?

WARREN:

All the State leaders agree that never before this year has such a high quality of work been done by Club members. Nearly all agree, also, that this year more effort than ever before was made to make the "Club members' demonstrations of real value to the communities in which the members lived. Now let's see what are some of the trends in individual lines of work. Which ones are growing fastest in the Northeast, Mr. Potter?

POTTER:

I should say health club work, clothing work, work in conservation of natural resources. This is a new branch of 4-H Club work but it has been growing fast.

TURNER:

Your comments apply just as much to the Midwest as the Northeast. If anything the growth in conservation clubs has been greater in the Midwest. Perhaps because we started later.

Eighteen thousand club members in Kansas alone did conservation work during 1936. How about the South, Sheffield?

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

SHEFFIELD:

Our boys and girls are planting trees, particularly in Tennessee and North Carolina. But they are doing much more than that. They are carrying on soil conservation projects. The work of Oklahoma in this field is mighty well-known. Last year over 600 Oklahoma club members ran terrace lines over 27 thousand acres of land.

REESE:

I can tell the same story for the Far West but to get back to other trends in project work -- yes, I will quit in just a moment Mr. Salisbury -- just let me say that a strong development of this year was the work of whole clubs in making the life of the community more enjoyable. They have helped to beautify the public buildings inside and out; they have arranged and produced dramatizations and pageants; they have organized themselves into choruses, bands, and orchestras, and by the way, the radio has played an important part in the musical activities of the clubs both in groups and individuals.

SMITH:

And radio also is playing an important part today in reporting other achievements state by state Miss Reese.

SALISBURY:

Yes. We will have to leave Washington now Dr. Smith and go back to the Homesteaders' orchestra so we can get in one musical selection before the state reporting begins. Ladies and gentlemen, we now return to Everett Mitchell in Chicago.

(12:45 - 1:15 Eastern Standard Time -- State Extension Service period)

At 1:18 discussion continues with:

SALISBURY:

Here we are back in Washington again. During the part of this program dedicated to the state reports of 4-H club achievement, this group here listened with admiration to the youngsters and older citizens who were telling about some of the progress made by Maryland 4-H clubs during the past year. But I know that each of you heard an equally inspiring report from your own state people, so let's get back to Dr. Smith and Miss Warren, Miss Reese, Mr. Potter, Mr. Turner and Mr. Sheffield for their reports of nation-wide 4-H club achievement.

Just before we left our previous Washington session they were talking about some of the trends in 4-H club demonstration work. Miss Reese had just called our attention to -- but Dr. Smith, won't you take over the presiding officer's work here?

SMITH:

All right, Morse. As you were saying, Miss Reese had just made the point that to her mind an outstanding trend in 4-H demonstration work during the year was that the clubs were working as a unit doing things for their communities and for the cultural advancement of their members more than they had in previous years. Had you left anything unsaid Miss Reese, when we were so courteously interrupted by Mr. Salisbury?

REESE:

No, I think you have stated the point we made Dr. Smith. Perhaps Miss Warren has some statistics about the number of these service activities carried on during the past year.

WARREN:

Nothing precise, Miss Reese and Dr. Smith. I do have a report here that more than 15 thousand clubs carried on some definite community improvement work during the year.

Now here are a few more statistical points gathered in the preliminary summaries of 4-H club work in 1936 which serve to highlight trends having to do with the welfare of rural young folks. One of the most important things that shows up in our reports is the increase in the number of 4-H club members entering college. Last year former 4-H members constituted nearly one-third of the entire student enrollment in agriculture and home economics at the Land Grant Colleges. Naturally as the enrollment of former 4-H club members increased, the number of cooperative houses maintained by these young folks on college campuses to cut down the cost of attending college -- the number of these cooperative houses increased also.

Finally, and I mention it with due modesty, I think it is significant that the ~~number~~ of full time county club agents increased during the year, and the number of full time county home demonstration and agricultural agents also increased, meaning that more time of such agents could be put upon club work. I think this increase in the employed personnel looking after 4-H club work played its part, along with the increase in the number of volunteer local leaders, in bringing about the larger enrollment, the higher percentage of completion, and the other progress of the year. I think that winds up my reporting, Dr. Smith.

SMITH:

Well, we all hope and, if pressed, would say that we believe that the fact that more extension workers were available for 4-H club work during the past year helped to account for the considerable progress made. But now let's turn our faces to the future -- write a "well done" upon the record of 1936 and put the searchlight on the probable trends of 1937. Where is 4-H club work going and why? Ray Turner has not had much to say so far but I know he has done a lot of thinking about the future of 4-H club work. Let's have your comments, Ray.

TURNER:

Well, Dr. Smith, my thinking about the future of 4-H clubs has been revolving around a few points. First, I don't think there will be any radical change in the method of the work. "Learn to do by doing," is still the philosophy of the 4-H clubs. A basic qualification for membership always will be, I believe, that the club member carry on a worthwhile project in farming or homemaking.

Now, the second thing that stands out in my mind is that each year the number of club members in the older age clubs -- 17 to 20 years -- increases. I think this is a good thing, and I hope it continues. It is especially valuable to the individuals who continue their school training in these older age club groups.

The third thing I have noticed is that the size of the project carried by the member is increasing. And I suppose that is partly due to the fact that more of the older boys and girls -- young men and women -- are enrolled in 4-H club work. But you people/have been listening to this

program over a period of seven years that it has been on the air have probably noticed that each year the club members reporting on their activities are much more likely to be people who have carried on a pretty good sized piece of farm or home work such as caring for an entire poultry flock, growing several acres of crops, or developing a herd of dairy cattle for the boys; or for the girls, canning all the home grown food products specified in the family food budget for the year. Now the fourth thing I have noticed is that the clubs are adding activities -- and Miss Reese spoke of this -- activities that are for the good of the club and their ^{home} community. I mean the bands and orchestras and choruses, the dramatic clubs and camps, and the activities in the conservation of wildlife and community improvement.

Finally, I want to lay emphasis upon the trend toward more and better prepared volunteer local leaders. The county leaders training and planning conferences are helping mightily to bring this about.

SMITH:

Your comments on trends in the North Central States will stand for the whole country. Sheffield has already mentioned the importance of the leaders' training in the South. Miss Reese and Mr. Potter have agreed for the East and the West.

POTTER:

Yes, I would agree for the East on all of Ray's points. I would like to add one more point on a trend in 4-H club work which is growing fast in the East and I understand also in the other sections. That is the tendency to carry on the competitions in 4-H club work in such a way you won't have it just a knock-down and drag-out battle for a prize, but you will have all the club members trying to reach a certain standard of excellence in performance.

Briefly, the idea is to have the contests and awards stimulate not bitter competition but achievement by all those taking part. Here is a comment from the state club agent in Vermont on this idea:

"This plan is more justly fair for all entrants. Each receives his own mark for what it is worth. All may be winners if they 'know their stuff.'"

That is something to be striven for, I think.

REESE:

So do all of us, Mr. Potter. I have had similar comments from club leaders in Western States. Here is one from a county club agent in Oregon:

"This system would do away with complaints made by parents and relatives and with envious feeling between 4-H club members."

SALISBURY:

Well, you people have made remarks about possible trends for the future. I know it would be interesting to 4-H club members and leaders to spend a great deal more time on this discussion but now let's ask Dr. Smith to draw this discussion to a close and give us his view of the meaning of achievements of the people, and of what is presaged for the future in 4-H club work.

Will you take the microphone for the remainder of our period, Dr. Smith?

SMITH:

(Dr. Smith to make his own comment for the remaining three minutes.)

SALISBURY:

Thank you very much, Dr. Smith. And thanks also to Ray Turner, C. E. Potter, C. A. Sheffield, Madge J. Reese and Gertrude L. Warren, of the Federal Office of Cooperative Extension Work. To conclude this 4-H Achievement Day program we return now to Everett Mitchell in Chicago.

